

L. E. TYNER
R-14, -INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

BOOOTH TARKINGTON'S new novel, *LITTLE ORVIE*, is the thirty-sixth book of the author who has won the deepest affection and highest distinction which his fellow countrymen can bestow. Twice winner of the Pulitzer Prize, he has recently received from the American Institute of Arts and Letters the gold medal for distinguished fiction which has been awarded to only two other novelists, William Dean Howells and Edith Wharton. And his fame is not limited to America. His books have been translated and published in all countries where books are a staple of civilization.

Tarkington published his first novel, *THE GENTLEMAN FROM INDIANA* in 1899 when he was thirty years old but his literary beginnings were years earlier in a happy Indianapolis childhood when he dictated stories to a long-suffering sister. His two enthusiasms for Jesse James, the outlaw, and G. P. R. James, the novelist, were blended in these early tales which always began, "It was dusk and four horsemen were seen riding over the top of the hill."

THE GENTLEMAN FROM INDIANA was not Tarkington's first novel. He had already written CHERRY, a story of his beloved Princeton in the days preceding the Revolution, and MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRE, but they had languished in editorial offices. For eight years he had been writing stories which were rejected with singular regularity. With candor he confessed that the result of his first five years of work was exactly \$22.50. Then MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRE appeared in McClure's Magazine and his acquaintance with rejection slips was over.

Mr. Tarkington has won supremacy in many fields. After twenty-five years MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRE remains the most exquisite and flawless of all hearts-and-swords romances. Such novels as ALICE ADAMS and THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS are the most brilliant type of modern realism. In PENROD Tarkington created a métier of his own. His stories of Penrod and Sam, Willie Baxter, and Little Orvie will long remain classics of American boyhood.

Although he has traveled much and is equally at home in Paris, in Rome, or on the Riviera, Tarkington has always lived in Indianapolis, the home of his childhood. He has a summer home, "Seawood," at Kennebunkport which he calls "The House that

Penrod Built." Here he spends increasingly long summers working in his huge two-story study with its windows facing north or on the old schooner which he keeps tied to his wharf.

Mr. Tarkington has many literary aversions, among them sentimentalists and intensists. His own artistic creed he expresses best in a letter to a young novelist: "Pick your reader: the best reader you have inside *you*: then make him a person who doesn't know your artist-self's intentions. Make him see them. Realize that he is in your hands and play with his imagination. Startle him, amuse him, make him see what you see—make him feel your words—flush him with colors. And always by suggestion. Make *him* tell the story. Use closed doors. Make him act for himself the scene you don't tell him. Suggest—give him a smell, that's all.

"We are here—we writers to discover and reveal things about life—and we see the finest means of doing so—the most vivid means. We must make our words into colors and sounds—and the cheap old tricks and phrases won't do that. You've got to get living words out of yourself. Nobody else's words: the used word is stale."

Year after year the society grows of those who believe that Booth Tarkington is one of the few American authors who

will live, and who delight in collecting his novels for that special shelf of books which are worn ragged with re-reading and happy familiarity. It is for these Tarkingtonians who know every trial of lovely Julia Atwater, every desperate escape of Penrod, every heartache of haunting, tragic Alice Adams, as well as those more recent readers who are pursuing the adventures of almost toothless little Orvie, that we are publishing the One-by-One Edition of Mr. Tarkington's works.

In an attractive new format, with freshly designed jackets and uniform binding, we have issued seven of Mr. Tarkington's most famous and best-loved books. At frequent intervals we will add other titles until the edition is complete. Many of Mr. Tarkington's books, MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRE and PENROD, for instance, have been published in so many editions (we have actually lost count of the MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRE and there are more than twenty editions of PENROD) that the reader who likes to collect his favorite author in bindings that are similar and pleasing next each other on his shelf, has found it next to impossible with the books of Mr. Tarkington. Now the One-by-One Edition presents them in a definitive edition, handsome, inexpensive, uniform. And as each new title is issued, it may be added to the library with the

satisfaction that every true book-lover has in watching his collection grow.

These are the novels which are now published in the ONE-BY-ONE EDITION :

Gentle Julia

This is the story which, in spite of many artful efforts to seduce him into infidelity, remains the book Alexander Woolcott most cherishes of all Mr. Tarkington's works. This chronicle of the Atwaters, of lovely Julia who felt the responsibility of being the prettiest girl in town, and of Gamin the poodle with the bang like a black chrysanthemum, eyes like winking garnets and a golden clown's heart, create a fraternity among those who delight in it. Mr. Woolcott reports that Kathleen Norris, a Gentle Julian of long standing, once bought a copy for a friend at a second-hand bookstore—but just as she was going to present it, let her eye wander to a familiar page and decided that she must keep it to enliven a train journey. That night there were several complaints to the porter about the mystery of Lower 10, from behind the curtain of which recess there kept issuing at intervals peals of maniacal Irish laughter.

Another Gentle Julian is Edna Ferber,

whose favorite epithet for her neighbors is that they are vile things upon whom she would not wipe the oldest pair of shoes in the world. All Gentle Julians are united by Mr. Tarkington's fondness for the absurd human race. And the human race "surprised and gratified," says Mr. Woollcott, "reciprocates."

THE Magnificent Ambersons

This novel of the life of an American family and of the life of an American city in its big, growing time is one of the principal landmarks along Mr. Tarkington's line of progress from the exquisite romance of *MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRE* to the flawless realism of *ALICE ADAMS*. It won the Pulitzer Prize for 1918 and remains one of his greatest novels.

The Ambersons had been magnificent in the day when every prosperous family with children kept a Newfoundland dog. And bits of their splendor lasted through their decline as their midland town grew into a city and crowded its grubby business streets nearer and nearer the Ambersons' front yard. Like *THE TURMOIL*, *THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS* expresses Mr. Tarkington's rebellion against the god of Bigness

and the lust for power that characterized the arrogant, mercenary growth of midland cities in that prosperous era before the war. With **THE TURMOIL** and **THE MIDLANDERS** it forms a trilogy of a city's growth from ruts on the prairies to filling stations on every third corner.

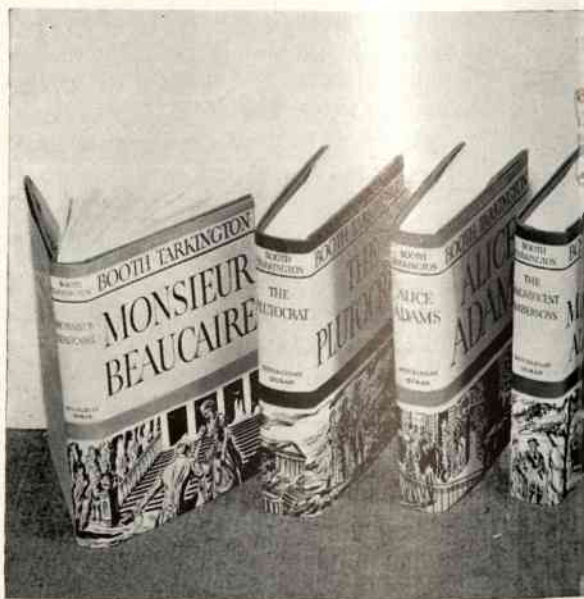
The Plutocrat

This odyssey of an American business man is a story of hilarious overtones and undertones of serious meaning. Mr. Tinker, the Plutocrat, is taken out of his Middle Western home where he is the big man of his town, a self-made magnate, a man of power and humor, and put on a ship and moved to Algeria. With him go his spoiled and jealous wife and his smouldering, sullen and amazingly pretty daughter, a modern girl who knows her way about.

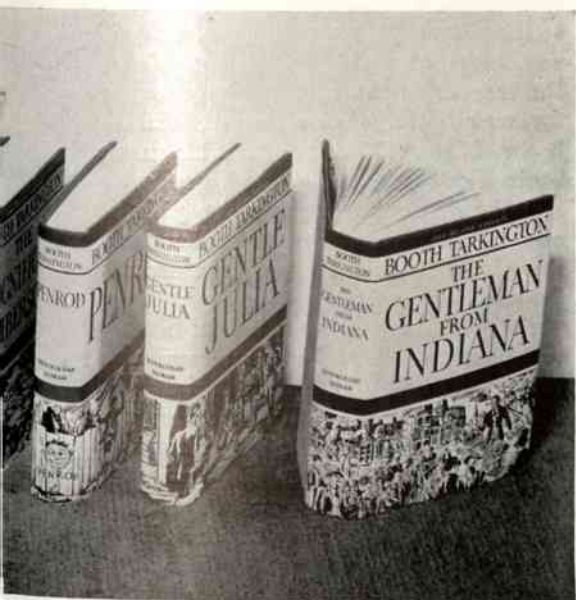
"Earl Tinker," said his wife, "all you know how to do is to throw your money away."

"Well, it always works, doesn't it?" he answered. And it did. Who has forgotten his progress among the awe-struck Algerians!

"**THE PLUTOCRAT** has all of the realism of the Babbitts of literature," says Stewart Edward White, "and in addition the spiritual values of genuine power."



● The One-by-One Edition of Booth Tarkington's works is handsome, newly designed, definitive. It now contains GENTLE JULIA, THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS, ALICE ADAMS, THE PLUTOCRAT, PENROD, THE GENTLEMAN FROM INDIANA and



MONSIEUR BEUCAIRE. From time to time new titles will be issued in this attractive uniform binding until the One-by-One Edition represents Mr. Tarkington's complete works. Each volume \$1.50.

Alice Adams

This story of a small town girl grown old enough to be skeptical of her illusions and brave enough to face them, taxes the vocabulary of praise. It was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for 1921, the second novel for which Mr. Tarkington received that honor. Many critics consider it his greatest book. The dinner party which goes wrong and the dance for which Alice picks her own violets remain for many readers among the almost unbearably poignant moments in literature.

Although ALICE ADAMS is Mr. Tarkington's supreme work of uncompromising realism, he is by no means without a little spark of optimism. As Alice goes up those fatal, dingy stairs in the last chapter, we realize that she and her environment together have made a sorry mess of things but we cannot help wondering whether she will not wrest a triumph from her failure. She is clever enough to know that she has been living by false values. Perhaps she has a gleam of hope. The author does not forbid it. The conclusion is not happy but it is fine and true.

Monsieur Beaucaire

For thirty-five years this delicate and well nigh flawless romance has remained

the peer of all the exquisite swords-and-flowers school. It has run through edition after edition until neither Mr. Tarkington nor his publishers can keep count of the readers who have delighted in its grace and beauty. A drawing which Mr. Tarkington had made in college days first suggested to him this tale of the dashing Frenchman who loved a fair English lady and, single-handed, vanquished thirteen swordsmen, in the days of powder, patches and perukes.

To this day MONSIEUR BEUCAIRE, with its exquisite and airy grace, remains one of the most popular of all Mr. Tarkington's books.

And just published as this booklet goes to press are PENROD and THE GENTLEMAN FROM INDIANA. This will be followed by other titles until the edition is complete with LITTLE ORVIE and, of course, Mr. Tarkington's future books.

LITTLE ORVIE, the almost toothless, seven-year-old hero of the new book, is the third of Mr. Tarkington's immortal boys. Willie Baxter in SEVENTEEN, Penrod and Orvie, the most absurd, abused and misunderstood little boy who was ever pursued by an unkindly fate, are in reverse chronological order portraits of the three ages of boy which will long remain classics of the boy of our generation.

Orvie's encounters with that curly haired

villain, little Marie from Kansas City, and his almost very first experience with love, have made him as strong a favorite with Tarkingtonians as Penrod and Gentle Julia. F. Tennyson Jesse, the distinguished English novelist, declares it a minor miracle that the author can be so lovable without ever being sentimental, and marvels at the craftsmanship and deep knowledge of human nature behind the fun and laughter.

It was for Mr. Tarkington's artistry, his humanity and eminence in American literature that he was awarded the Gold Medal of the American Institute of Arts and Letters. Of the Institute's twenty-four awards, he is the third novelist who has been so honored. During the past thirty years he has reflected our social history with humor, irony, kindness and genius. In his scores of characters he has composed a gallery of American characters "of whom the typicalness and the authenticity are greater than the creations of any other contemporaneous author," says Mark Sullivan in *Our Times*.

THE WORKS OF
BOOTH TARKINGTON

(Exclusive of plays and privately printed editions)

THE GENTLEMAN FROM INDIANA. A brilliant young man's struggle in the environment of a commonplace town.

MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRE. How a dashing Frenchman loved a fair lady of England, in the days of powder, patches, and perukes.

THE TWO VAN REVELS. A love story of the Mexican War period.

CHERRY. The love affair of a college student at Nassau Hall, in the days preceding the American Revolution.

IN THE ARENA. Six short stories, illustrative of conditions existing in American politics.

THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN. A young man's determined struggle to retrieve a lost reputation.

THE BEAUTIFUL LADY. An Italian gentleman suffers the humiliation of becoming a human billboard.

HIS OWN PEOPLE. A young American's adventures in Europe.

THE GUEST OF QUESNAY. Through an automobile accident, a dissolute young husband lost his memory.

BEASLEY'S CHRISTMAS PARTY.

The story of a misunderstood lover-politician, and of his device for amusing a sick child.

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PENROD. A joyful study of a very human boy, a fit companion for Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer.

THE TURMOIL. A saga of the American craze for bigness.

THE MIDLANDER. The supplanting of the old by the new.

SEVENTEEN. An understanding picture of the age of calf-love.

THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS. A novel of the life of an American family and of the life of an American city. Awarded the Pulitzer Prize for 1918.

RAMSEY MILHOLLAND. The story of a Penrod coming to manhood. Tarkington's nearest approach to a "war book."

ALICE ADAMS. Alice is "the flapper grown old enough to be skeptical of her illusions." Awarded the Pulitzer Prize for 1921.

HARLEQUIN AND COLUMBINE. A biting satire as well as a delicate romance of the theatre.

GENTLE JULIA. The real heroine is not Julia, but Florence, "going on fourteen." She might be called a feminine Penrod.

THE FASCINATING STRANGER AND OTHER STORIES. Each story reveals Mr. Tarkington's ingenuity at the revelation of the humorous aspects of life in a Mid-Western town.

PENROD AND SAM. This book, with "Penrod," its predecessor, is an American classic of childhood.

WOMEN. Portraits of women which are worthy of hanging in the same gallery with Alice Adams.

THE WORLD DOES MOVE. Wise and charming reflections about our modern life.

THE PLUTOCRAT. The history of an American business man who goes on a cruise to Algeria.

GROWTH. The story of a city's growth traced in the lives of three generations of one family from the time of mere ruts on the prairie to beautifully paved streets. "The Turmoil," "The Magnificent Ambersons," and "The Midlanders" have been rewritten to form a consecutive whole.

CLAIRE AMBLER. The odyssey of a modern young thing, from her early

conquests on a Maine seashore to her innocent and devastating sojourn on the Riviera and home again.

LOOKING FORWARD AND OTHERS. In six essays Tarkington discusses some of the most perplexing problems that beset us all.

YOUNG MRS. GREELEY. The story of a young wife's effect upon her husband's business life.

THE NEW PENROD BOOK—PENROD JASHBER. Further adventures of the irrepressible Penrod.

MIRTHFUL HAVEN. Summer in an old Maine seaport town, the romance of a native girl and one of the wealthy summer folk.

MARY'S NECK. A gay, satirical history of Mr. Massey and his family storming an exclusive Maine summer resort.

WANTON MALLY. A romance of England in the reign of Charles the Merry.

PRESENTING LILY MARS. A small-town girl with genius storms Broadway.

LITTLE ORVIE. The adventures of an almost wholly toothless little boy going on eight. "Seventeen," "Penrod," and "Little Orvie" are classic portraits of the American boy.

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L. E. TYNER
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BOOTH TARKINGTON

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BOOTH TARKINGTON

I have observed

that a reader seldom peruses a book with pleasure till he knows whether the writer of it be a black or a fair man, of a mild or choleric disposition, married or a bachelor, with other particulars of the like nature that conduce very much to the right understanding of the author."

The Spectator

***These Booklets will be
sent FREE upon request***

The Kipling Index

¶ With Kipling's own story of how he wrote his first book

Stewart Edward White

¶ The story of the man who has brought the East, South, and North to understand the West

Joseph Conrad

¶ An appreciation of the work of a man whose sea tales are the finest in the language

O. Henry

¶ A little story of the life and work of this typical American

Booth Tarkington

¶ A gentleman from Indiana—His life and his works

Booth Tarkington

A GENTLEMAN FROM INDIANA

THE MAN — HIS WORK — HIS OPINIONS

By ASA DON DICKINSON

MARK TWAIN'S wife called him "Youth." And it would not be surprising if Booth Tarkington's intimates had hit upon the same name, for it is to youth that we look for vivacity, the spirit of good fellowship, and a loving appreciation of the fine flower of romance — the ebullient qualities most characteristic of Mr. Tarkington's personality.

He was born several years ago in Indianapolis and began to dictate stories to a long-suffering sister before he could write himself. Two enthusiasms seized him at about the same time — one for Jesse James the outlaw, the other for G. P. R. James the novelist. Perhaps the two were blended into one in the boy's eager mind. At any rate, there were desperate robber plays in the barn and the first pages of many tales of blood were written, and they always began, "It was dusk and four horsemen were seen riding over the top of the hill."

From early boyhood he enjoyed close friendship with his fellow-townsmen, James Whitcomb Riley and Meredith Nicholson, and we can imagine the reverence with which the youth with literary aspirations regarded the poet-friend of twice his years whose fame

was already secure. Their long walks together — the junior listening with rapt attention to the senior's "moonings" — surely had momentous consequences unconnected with the appalling midnight lunches of pie, watermelon, strong coffee and Welsh rarebits which marked the termination of these rambles.

In due time Tarkington attended Phillips Exeter Academy, and began his college career at Purdue University, like a good Indianian. At the beginning of the Junior year he entered Princeton and then began what he would probably still describe as the happiest and most successful years of his life. He assures us that he studied some and we must believe him, for he stood well in his class. But how in the world did he manage it? He filled a prominent place in so many lines of student activity that we wonder where he found time for even casual attention to the curriculum. He wrote, he drew, he sang, he composed music, he acted. This man from the dead levels of a Middle Western state took to every form of artistic expression as a duck takes to water. In attempting to explain his varied talents, his relationship to the famous Booth family of actors has been recalled; and a purely imaginary Gallic strain in his ancestry has been invented.

On being asked, what Princeton gave him, he replies, "Some happy years and recollections — an uninterrupted affection for and interest in classmates and friends. Princeton becomes part of the life of her sons. Also I have no doubt that I imbibed some education there. Though it seems to me that I *tried* to avoid *that* as much as possible."

He might have been forgiven if talent so universal

had resulted in the self-conceit to which the college youth is sometimes subject, but his popularity among his fellows is ample evidence that envy was disarmed by modesty, as in the case of "The Great Harkless," in "The Gentleman from Indiana."

His classmates tell us that when the Seniors gathered on the steps of Nassau Hall, in the long twilights of the spring days, there were always cries for "Tark" and "Danny Deeever," the song he had made his own. He would try desperately to keep out of sight and enjoy the singing of the others. But it was no use. "Tark" always had to do his stunt sooner or later and his song marked the climax of the evening.

This modesty never forsook him, even after he had definitely arrived as a successful author. As witness, the following "Rondel" which hangs to-day on the wall of the Princeton Club, in New York City, beside a portrait sketch of him standing beside the piano.

RONDEL

The same old Tark — just watch him shy
Like hunted thing, and hide, if let,
Away behind his cigarette
When "Danny Deeever" is the cry.
Keep up the call and by and by
We'll make him sing, and find he's yet
The same old Tark.

No "Author Leonid" we spy
In him, no cultured ladies' pet:
He just drops in, and so we get
The good old song, and gently guy
The same old Tark — just watch him shy!

Bright college years must pass at last, and soon after his graduation he returned to Indianapolis to engage in his real life work, which his inability to take himself with absolute seriousness makes him describe as "fussin' with literachoor." But it is very plain that his work was no joke to him, for he says, "Writing is a trade, and, like any other trade, it must be learned. We must serve our apprenticeship; but we must work it out alone. There are no teachers. We must learn by failure and by repeated efforts how the thing should be done. . . . I always wrote — somehow and anyhow — but I wanted to be an illustrator; that is, I *thought* I did. In '95 I got a pen drawing in *Life* and thought my start had come. Then *Life* rejected 31 subsequent drawings and I kept on writing and quit drawing."

These were indeed days and years of trial, and a mere shallow dillettantism might have been expected from a brilliant, young man, on whom rested no necessity of earning his bread and butter. But as old Tom Martin of Plattville might say, "he had sand in his craw" and he kept on writing and re-writing sundry stories which he tells us were "rejected every time and for eight years"! With cheerful candor, he has confessed that the gross return from his first five years of work was exactly \$22.50.

At length the editor of a magazine took a fancy to "Cherry" and accepted it. But he lacked the courage of his conviction and the manuscript languished in his drawer till "Monsieur Beaucaire" appeared in *McClure's Magazine*. This gem was a sensational success and immediately won careful consideration



"THE MAJOR'S EYES REFUSE TO
MEET THE EYES OF ENSIGN GAY"

From drawing by Booth Tarkington, illustrating his play "The Kisses of Marjorie"

and, consequently, publication for "The Gentleman from Indiana." It also speedily delivered "Cherry" from its limbo of obscurity.

Mr. Tarkington had arrived! And it is safe to say his acquaintanceship with "rejection slips" came to a permanent end then and there.

In telling how his first full-sized book came to be written, he says: "I'd been writing short stories until I thought I might venture a bigger job — so I did. All the short stories, including 'Monsieur Beaucaire,' had been rejected by several magazines, and I had no idea that the novel would get into print. Of course, I *hoped* it might. I'd have written it just the same if I'd been sure it wouldn't. Mr. McClure took it. It was 'The Gentleman from Indiana.'"

With characteristic loyalty he adds, "I had no real success until I struck Indiana subjects." He is an Indianian first of all and the rest of us Americans can be thankful that, Indiana being so typical a state, the life he has chosen to depict expresses so adequately the life of the country at large.

He was once elected to the legislature as a Republican, but speedily became an insurgent. Many are the tales that are told about the political campaigning into which he plunged with boyish zest. Here is one echo of those stirring days which he repeats himself with great gusto:

"Going to vote for Tarkington?"

"That actor fellow?"

"Yes, that acrobat."

"Sure, I'm goin' to vote fer him. Jes' wanter see what the durn fool'll do!"

There is another story about a gorgeous waistcoat, and electioneering in a piano factory. But as the joke was on the other fellow in this case, Tarkington is tired of it. Then there is that shabby old veteran, the "Doughnut Story." But no wise man has told that in his presence for years. He is a patient man, but constant dropping will wear away the stone and even the worm will turn. Few are they who care to invite the shafts of Tarkington's wit.

Indianapolis is not the whole world to Tarkington, and though he probably thinks it the best city in which to live, he prefers the country. In fact he finds country life so alluring that he has to do nearly all his *work* in towns. He has spent years in New York and says he knows "very little about even one bit of it." He likes Rome, Naples, the Island of Capri, and, as might be expected, Paris, most of all. For he is surely part Frenchman himself, as is witnessed by the gay vivacity of his temperament and his love for the picturesque days of the *ancien régime*.

It is interesting to note that of thirteen favorite authors which he names, no less than four are Frenchmen: Cherbuliez, Daudet, Balzac and Dumas. He reads more autobiography, preferably French, than anything else. Of English authors, he prefers Meredith, Stevenson, James, Wells, Bennett and Hardy; and Bennett is a close personal friend. Among his compatriots he greatly admires the work of Mark Twain, Howells, and Riley; and confesses a special fondness for "The Boss of Little Arcady," by his friend, Harry Leon Wilson.

He has literary aversions too in plenty, and finds it

hard to particularize in so wide a field. He says, "Perhaps I most hate the kind of 'literary thinking' which would hold the whole of the 'Iliad,' for instance, to be literature — the kind of literary thinking which accepts the Classics as sacred and unassailable. After that, I hate the sentimentalists, the intensists, and the baby-talk school."

The critics have babbled a great deal as to his own proper *métier*, and most of them have advised him to stick to romanticism. But he refuses to pigeonhole or be pigeonholed, and maintains that the only thing worth considering is *how a book is written*. He says, "I don't care to what so-called class it is considered to belong. But, as a matter of fact, most 'romanticism' is of very inferior workmanship, nowadays. The best men don't seem interested to do it." (Lovers of Beaucaire fervently hope that the last of these sentences applies to Mr. Tarkington as little as does the one which precedes it!)

There isn't much "art" in American writing just now, he thinks. "The greatest figure in prose (Mark Twain) has gone. Mr. Howells has not been publishing a great deal. Mr. Riley has been quiet: the new figures have not emerged clearly. Doubtless they will as time goes on." But nevertheless he believes that *better writing* is being done to-day than ever before. He expects American fiction to become in time wholly "un-'Mediterranean': Studies of our people in the language of the people."

When asked what he thinks about the promise of the new men, he says, "No. I don't see any rising stars. There are probably some artists who will in



Boat "Larkington" and his new
motor "bret" at Kennebunkport

Key to the legend. The Skipper (in the picture he is
concealed behind the Owner) bears the
name of Job, pronounced to rhyme with "Job".

THIS CUT NEEDS NO EXPLANATION

time prove themselves to be artists. There are Americans who can write. Nobody is a star until he is dead — a long time dead. If he's starry too soon, usually he doesn't remain so. If you press me, I should have to say that I consider the most interesting phenomenon in modern literature to be its modernism. I don't know exactly what I mean by that, but it sounds as if it meant something — and it does."

It is significant that he considers Joseph Conrad "A

very big man — a wonderful man. He has a wonderful vision and gives it to us in a strange way that is full of beauty."

When one mentions Conrad, one thinks of open water, so it may as well be said here that Tarkington has become an enthusiastic motor boatman. He has traded his old twenty-foot dory for a thirty-footer and is enjoying "mild and slow" cruising. He has had a number of automobiles at home and abroad, but they are now banished and he expects to spend most of his spare time on the water henceforth. He has never been personally active in outdoor games, though he loyally supported athletics at college and he still usually gets to Princeton in the autumn for some of the football.

The average man is always interested to know how the genius does it. Mr. Tarkington rises at nine and is hard at it in a bath-robe at nine-thirty. He continues with as little food as possible, until evening. And sometimes he works eighteen hours at a stretch — often till after midnight. At any rate there is work every day till the task — novel, short story or play — is done. It is a relief to know that there are vacations between these periods of feverish activity. He corroborates the word of other novelist-dramatists when he says that the *writing* of a play is comparatively easy. But — "'putting it on' is another matter." And fiction, he feels, is his work. To know one's work, and how to do it, is surely the greatest of all satisfactions. Mr. Tarkington is to be congratulated.

Dalhousie to be made, and then when the
Spring came there was one whose feet
with baby-like rosy and
meat-lined me
to
open at
the day
with
sea-ber
in
June
Then
the
time
came
when
the sailors shouted: "My vessel waits."
The anchor is up for the voyage to

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The
man
sadly
saw
that
you
me
they
saw
that
not to the light
the necks that, since his is the loss.
There were shining journeys and
jambets to villages in the vicinity of

Autograph letter of Booth Tarkington. Showing in reduced facsimile two of his caricatures of himself.

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PORTRAITS

The best portrait of Tarkington is doubtless the painting by Blumenschein, which hangs in the author's home in Indianapolis. Many portraits have appeared in various magazines. Among others, may be mentioned those in *The Book Buyer* (19:252); *The Bookman* (10:309 — 14:488 — 16:214 — 18:587 [a caricature by George Brehm]); *The Critic* (36:399—37:396 [sketch by himself]); *Harper's Weekly* (46:1773 — 47:1961); and *Outlook* (72:818).

List of Published Works

"**The Gentleman from Indiana**", 1899, Doubleday, Page & Co.

A brilliant young man's struggle in the disheartening environment of a commonplace little town. Seeking only to lead a useful life, he finds also the path to success and happiness.

"The merit of it lies in its sincerity, the richness of its imaginative inspiration, and its continual surprising wittiness. There is stuff in the book and plenty of it." *Academy*, 2 June, 1900. Reviewed also in *Bookman*, 10:381 and *Independent* 52:66

"Monsieur Beaucaire", 1900, Doubleday, Page & Co. First published in *McClure's Magazine*, December, 1899 and January, 1900. How a dashing Frenchman loved a fair lady of England, in the days of powder, patches and perukes. (This story was gradually built up from a chance unpublished drawing by Tarkington, and lay in his desk two years before being sent to a publisher.)

"This little sketch . . . is handled with a lightness and brevity which do infinite credit to the American author." *Athenaeum*, 25 May, 1901. "'Monsieur Beaucaire' is one of the most charming and delicate bits of light fiction which have appeared for a very long time." *Bookman*, 11:44.

"The Two Vanrevels", 1902, Doubleday, Page & Co. A love story of the Mexican War period — "blithe, wholesome, optimistic, peopled with men of old-fashioned courtliness and women of gracious manners and soft-voiced charm."

"This is a capital story well planned, well written, and marked by a careful consideration of the niceties of character and by a very real spirit of humor. . . . His book deserves a welcome as one of the best of recent additions to American fiction." *Athenaeum*, 13 Dec. '02. Reviewed also in the *Dial*, 33:327, and in the *Bookman*, 10:373.

"Cherry", 1903, Harper & Brothers. First published in *Harper's Magazine*, January-February, 1901. The story of the love affair of a college student at Nassau Hall, in the days preceding the American Revolution.

"An exceptionally well-told tale, as tales go, delicate, original, and quaintly humorous." *Bookman*, 18:656. Reviewed also in *Harper's Weekly*, 47:1961, and in *Athenaeum* '04, 2:234.

"In the Arena", 1905, Doubleday, Page & Co. Six short stories, all illustrative of existing conditions in American politics.

"One lays the book aside with the conviction that the author's estimate of the situation is a pretty true one, and that he made singularly good use of his experience in Indiana politics." *Bookman*, 21:188. Reviewed also in *Academy*, 68:472; *Athenaeum*, '05, 1:589; *Critic*, 46:479; *Outlook*, 79:450; *Saturday Review*, 99:709.

"The Conquest of Canaan", 1905, Harper & Brothers. The story of a young man's determined struggle to retrieve a lost reputation, when inspired by the faith of the woman whom he loves.

"'The Conquest of Canaan' has not lost the note of refinement, but it has gained in solidity and distinctness of outline; it is an original story in point of plot; it is witty, spirited, romantic, and beautifully human in its spirit." *Outlook*, 81:708. Reviewed

also in *Athenaeum*, '95, 2:829; *Bookman*, 22:517; *Critic*, 48:286; *Current Literature*, 40:100; *Dial*, 40:155; *Independent*, 59:1153; *Literary Digest*, 32:495; *North American Review*, 182:926; *Reader*, 7:224.

"The Beautiful Lady", 1905, Doubleday, Page & Co. The story of an impoverished Italian gentleman who suffered the humiliation of becoming a human billboard, in order to pay for the maintenance and education of his two little nieces.

"A delightful trifle which, lacking the dramatic action of 'Monsieur Beaucaire', equals it in the originality of its conception, in its pathos, and surpasses it in its whimsical humor." *Bookman*, 21:615. Reviewed also in *Critic*, 47:286; *Current Literature*, 39:344; *Independent*, 59:580; *Literary Digest*, 21:93; *Review of Reviews*, 32:760.

"His Own People", 1907, Doubleday, Page & Co. A young American has adventures in Europe, where he is badly fooled by a bogus countess, and finally thinks it expedient to return to "His Own People."

"This is real comedy, and decidedly interesting." *New York Times* 12 Oct. '07. Reviewed also in *The Nation*, 85:400.

"The Guest of Quesnay", 1908, Doubleday, Page & Co. Through an automobile accident, a dissolute young husband lost his memory and consequently all knowledge of evil. This is the prologue as it were, to the real story which begins a couple of years later.

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"The Man from Home", with Harry Leon Wilson, 1908, Doubleday, Page & Co. A play based upon the adventures of a title-hunting American heiress.

"A good plot, shrewd interpretation of human nature, and irresistible humor." *Book Review Digest*, 4:351. Reviewed also in *A. L. A. Booklist*, 5:51; *Independent*, 65:1620; *N. Y. Times*, 14:88 (13 Feb., '09).

"Beazley's Christmas Party", 1909, Harper & Brothers. The story of a misunderstood lover-politician, and of his device for amusing a sick child.

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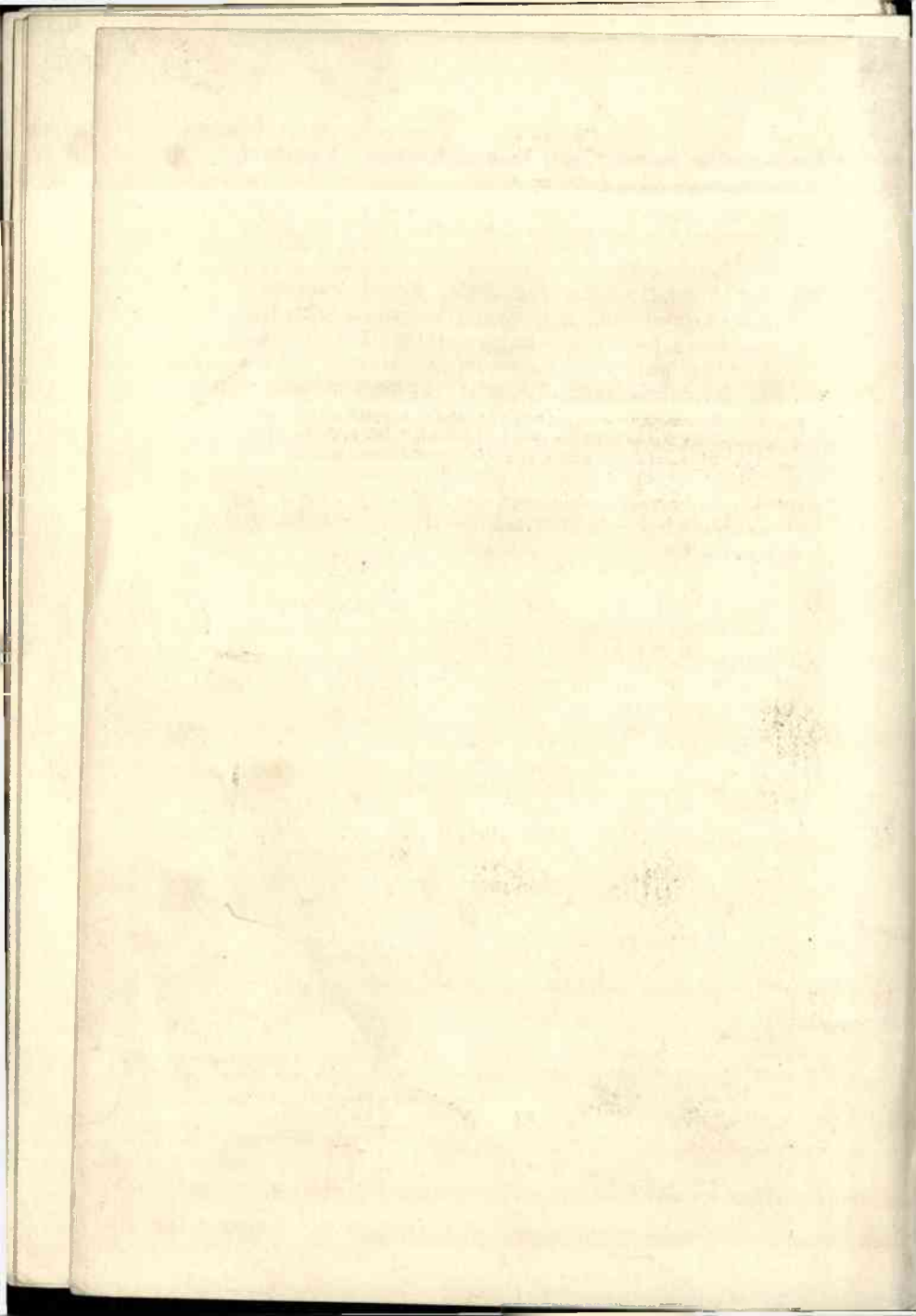
"Beauty and the Jacobin", 1912, Harper & Brothers. A drama of the French Revolution.

"A brilliant trifle, compact, clean cut, and finished in construction." *N. Y. Times*, 17:643 (3 November, '12). Reviewed also in *Independent*, 73:1261; and *Literary Digest*, 45:1020.

"The Flirt", 1913, Doubleday, Page & Co. Published serially in *Saturday Evening Post*. A study of a heartless coquette, and of the young brother who understood her. The diabolical boy, Hedrick, and his pretty sister are real characters who live in the reader's consciousness long after the book is finished.

"A story which the present reviewer has read with genuine enjoyment." *Bookman*, 37:81. "It is certain that to begin the book is to finish it." *N. Y. Times*, 18:294 (18 May, '13). Reviewed also in *Nation*, 96:416; *Review of Reviews*, 47:630.]

"Penrod", to be published in 1914, by Doubleday, Page & Co. The story of a boy — for adult readers — of the *genre* of "Huckleberry Finn."



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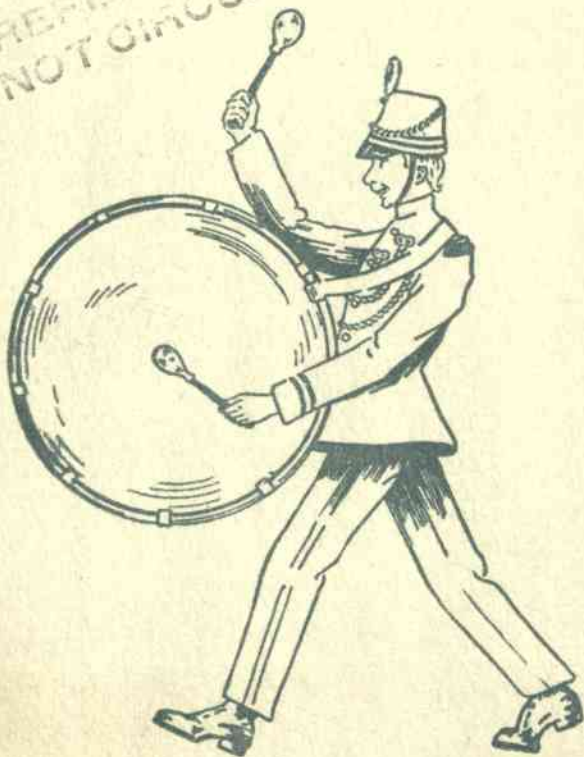
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The Spring
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The Spring Concert

Booth Tarkington



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New York

The Spring Concert

By

Booth Tarkington

Author of "The Turmoil," "Penrod," "Seventeen," etc.

 HE town was only about eighty years old, but it loved to think of itself as a "good old place," and it habitually spoke of the residence of its principal citizen as "that old-fashioned Ricketts property."

This was an under-statement: the Ricketts place was more than merely old-fashioned. So rapidly do fashions change in houses, nowadays, in small towns as well as in big, and so quickly does life become history, that the "Ricketts property" at fifty years of age was an actual archæological relic. Contemplating the place you contemplated a prevalent way of life already abandoned, and learned a bit of Midland history. The Ricketts place was a left-over from that period when every Midland townsman was his own farmer, according to his means; and if he was able, kept his cow and chickens, and raised corn and pigs at home.

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The barn was a farm barn, with a barnyard about it; here were the empty pig-pens and the chicken house, the latter still inhabited. In summer, sweet corn was still grown in the acre lot adjoining the barnyard; and, between that lot and the driveway from the barn, there was a kitchen garden, there was an asparagus bed, and there was a strawberry patch fringed with currant-bushes. Behind the house were outbuildings: the storeroom, the wash-house, the smoke-house. Here was the long grape-arbor, and here stood the two pumps: one of iron, for the cistern; the other a wooden flute that sang higher and higher to an incredible pitch before it fetched the water.

The house was a large, pensive-looking, honest old frame thing, with a front porch all across it; and the most casual passer-by must have guessed that there was a great deal of clean oilcloth on the hall floors, and that cool mattings were laid, in summer, in all the rooms—mattings pleasant to the bare feet of children. It was a house that “smelled good”: aromas at once sweet and spicy were wont to swim down the mild breezes of Pawpaw Street, whereon the Ricketts place fronted.

In the latter part of April the perfume of apple-blossoms was adrift on those breezes, too; for all the west side of the big yard was an apple orchard, and trees stood so close to the house that a branch of blossoms could be gathered from one of the “sitting-room” windows—and on a warm end-of-April day, when that orchard was full abloom, last year, there

sat reading a book, beneath the carnival clouds of blossom, an apple-blossom of a girl.

So she was informed by Mr. Lucius Brutus Allen. Mr. Allen came walking up Pawpaw Street from Main Street, about five o'clock in the afternoon; a broad, responsible figure with a broad, irresponsible face, and a good, solid, reddish-haired head behind the face. He was warm, it appeared; inclined to refresh his legs with a pause of leisure, his nose with the smell of the orchard, his eyes with the sight of its occupant. He halted, rested his stout forearms upon the top of the picket-fence, and in his own way made the lady acquainted with his idea of her appearance.

"A generous soil makes a generous people, Miss Mary," he observed; and she looked up gravely from her book at the sound of his tremulous tenor voice. "You see, most of this country in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys is fertile. We don't have to scratch the rocks for our crops, so we have time to pronounce our *r*'s. We've even got the leisure to drawl a little. A Yankee, now, he's too pinched for time, between his hard rocks and his hard winters, to pronounce his *r*'s; so he calls his mother 'motha,' and hurries on. But he's conscientious, Miss Mary; he knows he's neglected something, and so, to make up for it, he calls his sister 'Mariar.' Down South it's too hot for a fellow to trouble about the whole blame alphabet, so he says, 'Lessee, which lettuh's goin' to be the easies' to leave out?' he says. 'Well, the *r*'s, I reckon,' he says. 'An' *g*,' he says. 'I'll leave *r* out most the time, an' *g* whenever I get the chance—an' some-

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times *d an' t*. 'That'll be a heap easiuh,' he says, 'when I'm claimin' my little boy is the smahtis' chile in the worl'."

Mr. Allen paused genially, then concluded: "You see, Miss Mary, I've just been leading up logically to the question: Which is you and which is the rest of the apple-blossoms?"

Miss Ricketts made no vocal reply, but there was a slight concentration of the fine space between her eyebrows; decidedly no symptom of pleasure, though she might properly have enjoyed the loiterer's little extravagance, which was far from being inaccurate as extravagances go. Mr. Allen was forced to remind himself that "nobody loves a fat man," though he decided not to set his thought before the lady.

A smile of some ruefulness became just visible upon the ample surface of his face, then withdrew to the interior, and was transmuted into a quality of his odd and pleasant voice, which was distinctly rueful as he said:

"It's the weather, Miss Mary. You musn't mind what anybody says along during the first warm days in spring. People are liable to say anything at all."

"Yes," Miss Ricketts returned, not mollified. "I've just noticed." She gave him one dark glance, wholly unfavorable, as she spoke, and then looked down at her book again, allowing him no possible doubt that she wished to proceed with her reading.

"I'm a hard man to discourage," said Mr. Allen. "The band's going to play in the Square to-night. It's been practising 'Annie Laurie' and 'Tenting To-

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night' all winter, up in the storeroom over Tom Leggett's wall-paper and book emporium, and of course the boys are anxious to give their first concert. What I wanted to say was this: If I came by for you after supper, would you care to go?"

"No," said Miss Ricketts quietly, not looking up.

Before continuing and concluding the conversation, Lucius Brutus Allen paused to contemplate the top of her pink and white hat, which was significantly presented to his view as she bent over her book; and the pause was a wistful one on his part. "Seeing as that's the case," he said, finally, "I may be a hard man to discourage, and I *was* on my way home, but I believe I'll just turn right square around and go on back to the National House bar—and get me a drink of lemonade. I want to show people I'm as desperate as anybody, when I'm crossed."

Immediately, with an air of resolution, Mr. Allen set off upon the path by which he had come. He debouched upon Main Street, at the foot of Pawpaw, crossed the Square to the dismal brick pile much too plainly labeled, "National House Will Wheen Propr.," and passed between two swinging, green, knee-high doors on the ground floor. "George," he said to the bartender, "I'm not happy. Have you any lemons?"

The bartender rubbed the back of his neck, stooped, and poked and peered variously beneath the long bar. "Seems like I *did* have some, Lu," he said thoughtfully. "I remember seein' them lemons last Mon——"

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"No," Mr. Allen interrupted, sighing. "I've been through this before with you, George. I'll take buttermilk."

"Oh, got plenty *buttermilk!*" the bartender said, brightening; and supplied his customer from a large, bedewed white pitcher. "Buttermilk goes good this weather, don't it, Lu?"

"It do," said Lucius, gravely.

Glass in hand, he went to a small, round table where sat the only other present patron of the bar—a young man well-favored, but obviously in a state morbid if not moribund. He did not look up at Mr. Allen's approach; continuing to sit motionless with his faraway gaze marooned upon a stratum of amber light in his glass on the table before him.

He was a picturesque young man, and, with his rumpled black hair, so thick and wavy about his brooding white face, the picture he most resembled was that of a provincial young lawyer stricken with the stage-disease and bound to play *Hamlet*. This was no more than a resemblance, however; his intentions were different, as he roused himself to make clear presently, though without altering his attitude, or even the direction of his glance.

"What do you mean?" he inquired huskily, a moment after Mr. Allen had seated himself at the table. "What do you mean, slamming a glass of buttermilk down on my table, Lucius Brutus Allen?"

Mr. Allen put on a pair of eye-glasses, and thoughtfully examined the morose gentleman's countenance before replying. "I would consume this flagon of

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buttermilk in congenial melancholy, Joseph Pitney Perley."

Mr. Perley, still motionless, demanded: "Can't you see what I'm doing?"

"What are you doing, Joe?"

"Drinking!"

"Professionally?" Mr. Allen inquired. "Or only for the afternoon?"

"I don't want to be talked to!"

"I do," said Lucius. "Talk to me."

Here the bartender permitted himself the intervention of a giggle, and wiped his dry bar industriously—his favorite gesture. "You ain't goin' to git much talk out o' *Joe*, Lu!" he said. "All he's said sence he come in here was jest, 'Gimme same, George.' I tell him he ain't goin' to be in no condition to 'tend the band concert 's evening if he keeps on another couple hours or so. Me, I don't mind seein' a man drink some, but I like to see him git a little fun out of it!"

"Have you considered the band concert, Joe?" Mr. Allen inquired. "Do you realize what strange euphonies you'll miss unless you keep sober until seventy?"

The somber Perley relaxed his gaze, and uttered a fierce monosyllable of denunciation. "Sober!" he added, afterward. "I'm sober. That's my trouble. I've been trying to get tight for three hours!"

"I'll say this fer you," the bartender volunteered—"you been tryin' *good*, too!"

"Ever experiment any?" Lucius suggested. "Why don't you go over to Doc Willis's Painless Dental

Parlors? He's got a tank of gas there, and all you do is put a rubber thing over your nose and breathe. Without any trouble at all you'll be completely out of business in forty-five seconds."

"Yeh," said the bartender. "But it don't last more'n about four minutes."

"No; that's true," Lucius admitted. "But maybe Joe could hire Doc to tap him behind the ear with one of those little lead mallets when he sees him coming out of the gas. Joe'd feel just about the same tomorrow as he will if he stays here running up a bill with you. Fact is, I believe he'd feel better."

"I tell you," said Mr. Perley, with emphasis, "I'm drinking!" And for further emphasis he rattled his glass. "Give me the same, George," he said.

George held a bottle to the light. He meditated, rubbing the back of his head; then spoke: "Tell you what I'll do. The wife's waitin' supper fer me now; I want to git back up-town early fer the trade before the concert, because I look fer quite a rush——"

"Yes," interrupted Mr. Allen musingly. "Our community is going to see a night of wine and music, George."

"I'll jest open a fresh bottle fer you, Joe," the bartender continued; "and when I git back I'll charge you with how many drinks you take out of it; I got the place marked with my thumb. I'm goin' on home to supper. You want any more buttermilk, Lu?"

"Bring the pitcher," said Mr. Allen. "I will sup upon it."

"All right." And George brought to the table the

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pitcher of buttermilk, a dim saucer of crackers and cheese, a brown bottle, ice-water, and fresh glasses. After that he doffed his apron, put on his hat, but no coat, and went to the door, where he turned to say: "If anybody else comes in here before I git back——"

"And calls for liquor," Mr. Allen took up the sentence, as George paused in thought, "we shall be glad to——"

"Tell 'em," said George, "they don't git it!" He departed.

Mr. Allen helped himself to buttermilk, ate a cracker, leaned back in his chair, and began to hum "Annie Laurie."

"Stop that!" said Perley, sharply.

"Certainly," said Lucius. "I'll whistle instead."

"If you do," the troubled young man warned him, in good faith, "I'll kill you!"

"What can I do to entertain you, Joe?"

"You might clear out," his friend suggested darkly. "God knows I haven't asked for your society!"

"No," said Lucius. "Our fairest gifts do oft arrive without petition. What an unusual thought! Have you noticed——"

But the other burst out suddenly in a tragic fury: "Shut up! What's the matter with you? Can't you see I want to be alone?"

Mr. Allen remained placid. "What difference do I make?" he asked. "I thought you said you were 'drinking'? If you're really in earnest about it you don't care who's here or anywhere else."

"Don't you see I'm in *misery*?" cried Perley.

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"The ayes have it."

"Well, then, why in Heaven's name can't you——"

"I'll tell you," said Lucius. "I'm in misery, too. Terrible!"

"Well, what the devil do *I* care for that?"

"Haven't I got a right to sit here?" Lucius inquired mildly. "Haven't I got a right to sit here and drink, and cuss inside my innards, and take on the way you're doing? Mary Ricketts just told me that she wouldn't go to the band concert with me."

"Oh, do dry up!"

"Well, you're responsible for Mary's treatment of me, aren't you?" said Lucius. "I thought probably there'd be trouble when I saw you headed this way this afternoon."

"You do beat any ordinary lunatic!" the distressed young man protested. "I 'headed this way' this afternoon because I got one of my spells. You know well enough how it is with me, and how it was with my father before me—every so often the spell comes on me, and I've *got* to drink. What in the Lord's name has that to do with Mary Ricketts? I don't suppose I've even seen her for a month. Never did see anything of her, to speak of, in my life."

Mr. Allen replenished his glass from the pitcher of buttermilk before replying, and appeared to muse sorrowfully. "Well, maybe I was mistaken," he said. "But I——" He broke off a line of thought; then sighed and inquired: "When this 'spell' comes on you, Joe, you feel that you've '*got*' to go on until——"

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"You know I do! I don't want to talk about it."

"But suppose," said Lucius, "suppose something took your mind off of it."

"Nothing could. Nothing on earth!"

"But just suppose something did turn up—right in the start of a spell, say—something you found you'd rather do. You know, Joe, I believe if it did and you found something else was *really* pleasanter, it might be you'd never start in again. You'd understand it wasn't the fun you think it is, maybe."

"Fun!" Joe cried. "I don't *want* to drink!"

And at that his stocky companion burst into outright laughter. "I know you think so, Joe," he said apologetically, when his hilarity was sufficiently diminished. "Of course you believe it. I'm not denying that."

"By George!" the unfortunate young man exclaimed. "You *do* make me sick! I suppose if I had smallpox you'd say you weren't denying I believed I had it! You sit there and drink your buttermilk, and laugh at me like a ninny because you can't understand! No man on earth can understand, unless he has the thirst come on him the way mine does on me! And yet you tell me I only 'believe' I have it!"

"Yes, I ought to explain," said Mr. Allen soothingly. "It did sound unfeeling. One of the reasons you drink, Joe, is because this is a small town;—you have an active mind, a lot of the time there's nothing much to do, and you get bored."

"I told you nobody could understand such a thirst as mine—nobody except the man that's got one like it!"

"This hankering is something inside you, isn't it, Joe?"

"What of that?"

"It comes on you about every so often?"

"Yes."

"If there weren't any liquor in the world, you'd have the thirst for it just the same, would you?"

"Just the same," Perley answered. "And go crazy from it."

"Whereas," Mr. Allen returned, "since liquor's obtainable you prefer to go crazy from the imbibing of it instead of from the hanker for it. You find that more ossedalious, and nobody can blame you. But suppose alcohol had never been discovered, would you have the hanker?"

"No, because I wouldn't have inherited it from my father. You know as well as I do, how it runs in my family."

"So I do, Joe; so I do!" Mr. Allen sighed reminiscently. "Both your father and your Uncle Sam went that way. I remember them very well, and how they enjoyed it—the earlier stages, I mean. That's different from you, Joe."

"Different!" Joe laughed bitterly. "Do you suppose I get any 'enjoyment' out of it? Three days I'll drink now; then I'll be in hell—and I've got to go on. I've got to!"

"Funny about its being hereditary," said Lucius,

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musings aloud. "I expect you rather looked forward to that, Joe?"

His companion stared at him fiercely. "What do you mean by that?" he demanded.

"You always thought it was *going* to be hereditary, didn't you, Joe? From almost when you were a boy?"

"Yes, I did. What of it?"

"And maybe—" Lucius suggested, with the utmost mildness—"just possibly, say about the time you began to use liquor a little at first, you decided that this hereditary thing was inevitable, and the idea made you melancholy about yourself, of course; but after all, you felt that the hereditary thing made a pretty fair excuse to yourself, didn't you?"

"See here," Joe said angrily, "I'm not in any mood to stand——"

"Pshaw!" Lucius interrupted. "I was only going on to say that it's more and more curious to me about this hereditary notion. I'm thirty-five, and you're only twenty-six. I remember well when your father began to drink especially. I was seventeen years old, and you were about eight. You see you were already born then, and so I can't understand about the thirst being heredi——"

"Damn it all!" Joe Perley shouted; and he struck the table with his fist. "I told you I don't want to talk, didn't I?" Didn't you hear me say I was *drinking*?"

The amiable man across the table produced two

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cigars from his coat pocket. "We'll change the subject," he said. "Smoke, Joe?"

"No, thank you."

"We'll change the subject," Lucius repeated. "I gather that this one is painful to you. You don't mind my staying here if we talk about something else?"

"No—not much."

"I mentioned that I asked Mary Ricketts to go with me to the band concert to-night, didn't I?" Mr. Allen inquired, as he lit his cigar. "I was telling you about that, wasn't I, Joe?"

"You said something about it," Mr. Perley replied with evident ennui.

"You know, Joe," said Lucius, his tone becoming confidential, "I walk past the old Ricketts property every afternoon on my way home. It's quite considerable out of my way, but I always do. Fact is," he chuckled ruefully, "I can't help it."

"I suppose you want me to ask you why," said his gloomy companion, with sincere indifference.

"Yes, Joe, will you?"

"All right. Why can't you help it?"

"Well, there's something about that old place so kind of pleasant and healthy and reliable. This is a funny world: there's a lot of things a fellow's got to be afraid of in it, and the older he gets the more he sees to scare him. I think what I like best about that old Ricketts property is the kind of *safe* look it has. It looks as if anybody that belonged in there was safe from 'most any kind of disaster—bankruptcy, lunacy, 'social ambition,' money ambition, evil thoughts, or

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turning into a darn fool of any kind. You don't happen to walk by there much, do you, Joe?"

"No, I don't."

"Well, sir, you ought to!" said Lucius genially. "The orchard's in bloom, and you ought to see it. The Ricketts orchard is the show of this county. The good old judge has surely looked after those old apple-trees of his; they're every one just solid blossom. Yes, sir, every last one! Why, it made me feel like a dryad!"

"Like a who?"

"You mean that I'm thirty-five"—so Mr. Allen thought fit to interpret this question—"and that I'm getting a little fat, some baldish, and a whole lot reddish. So I am; but I'll tell you something, young Joseph: romance is a thing inside a person, just the same as your thirst. It doesn't matter what his outside is like. My trousers always bag at the knees, even when they're new, but my knees themselves are pure Grecian. It's the skinny seamstress of forty that dreams the most of marquises in silver armor; and darky boys in school forget the lesson in reveries about themselves—they think of themselves on horseback as generals with white faces and straight blond hair. And everybody knows that the best poets are always outrageously ordinary to look at. This is springtime, Joseph; and the wren lays an egg no bigger than a fairy's. The little birds——"

"By George!" Mr. Perley exclaimed, in real astonishment. "See here!" he said. "Had you been drinking a little yourself before you came in? If not, it's

the first time I knew a person could get a talking jag on buttermilk."

"No," said Lucius, correcting him. "It's on apple-blossoms. She was sitting under 'em pretending to read a book, but I suppose she was thinking about you, Joe."

"Who was?"

"Mary," Mr. Allen replied quietly. "Mary Ricketts."

"You say she was thinking about *me*?"

"Probably she was, Joe. She was sitting there, and the little birds——"

"I know you're a good lawyer," Joe interrupted, shaking his head in gloomy wonder, "but everybody in town thinks you're a nut, except when you're on a law case, and I guess they're about right. You certainly talk like one!"

Mr. Allen nodded. "A reputation like that is mighty helpful sometimes."

"Well, if you like it you're free to refer all inquirers to me," said Joe heartily. "You're trying to tell me Mary Ricketts was 'thinking' about me, and I don't suppose I've seen her as much as five times this year; and I haven't known her—not to speak of—since we were children. I don't suppose I've had twenty minutes' talk with her, all told, since I got back from college. The only girl I ever see anything of at all is Molly Baker, and that's only because she happens to live next door. I don't see even Molly to speak to more than once or twice a month. I don't have anything to do with *any* of the girls. I keep

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away from 'em, because a man with the curse I've got hanging over me——”

“Thought you didn't want to talk about that, Joe.”

“I don't,” the young man said angrily. “But I want to know what you mean by this nonsense about Mary Ricketts and me.”

“I don't know if I ought to tell you—exactly.” Here Lucius frowned as with a pressure of conscience. “I'm not sure I ought to. Do you insist on it, Joe?”

“Not if you've got to talk any more about 'the little birds!'” Joe returned with sour promptness. “But if you can leave them out and talk in a regular way, I'd like to hear you.”

“Have you ever noticed,” Mr. Allen began, “that Mary Ricketts is a beautiful girl?”

“She's not,” said Joe. “She's not anything like 'beautiful.' Everybody in town knows and always has known that Mary Ricketts is an ordinarily good-looking girl. You can call her pretty if you want to stretch it a little, but that's all.”

“That all, you think?”

“Certainly!”

“You ought to see her in the orchard, Joe!”

“Well, I'm not very likely to.”

“Well, just why not, now?”

“Well, why should I?”

“You mean you've never given much thought to her?”

“Certainly I haven't,” said Joe. “Why should I?”

“Isn't it strange now!” Mr. Allen shook his head

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wistfully. "I mentioned that I asked her to go to the band concert with me, didn't I, Joe?"

"You did."

"And did I tell you that she refused?"

"Lord, yes!"

"Well, that was it," said Mr. Allen, gently. "She just said, 'No!' She didn't say 'No, thank you.' No, sir, nothing like that; just plain 'No!' 'Well,' I thought to myself, 'now why is that? Naturally, she'd *want* to go to the concert, wouldn't she? Why, of course she would; it's the first public event that's happened since the lecture on 'Liquid Air' at Masonic Hall, along back in February. Certainly she'd want to go. Well, then, what's the matter? It must be simply she doesn't want to go with *you*, Lucius Brutus Allen!"

"That's what I said to myself, Joe. 'You're practically a fat old man from *her* point of view,' I said to myself. 'She wants to go but you aren't the fellow she wants to go *with*. Well, who is it? Evidently,' I reasoned, 'evidently he hasn't turned up, because she's just the least bit snappish the way she tells me she isn't pining for *my* escort.'

"Well, sir, I began to cast around in my mind to think who on earth it could be. 'It isn't Henry Wheen,' I thought, 'because she discouraged Henry so hard, more than a year ago, that Henry went and married that waitress here at his father's hotel. And it isn't Bax Lewis,' I thought, 'because she showed Bax *he* didn't stand any chance from the first. And it isn't Charlie McGregor or Cal Veedis,' I thought,

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'because she just *wouldn't* have anything to do with either of them, though they both tried to make her till the judge pretty near had to tell 'em right out that they'd better stay away. Well, it isn't Doc Willis, and it isn't Carlos Bollingbroke Thompson, nor Whit Connor,' I thought, 'because they're *old* bachelors like me—and that just about finishes the list.' Well, sir, there's where I had to scratch my head. 'It must be somebody,' I thought, 'somebody that hasn't been coming around the Ricketts property at all, so far, because she's never gone any place she could help with those that *have* been coming around there.' Then I thought of you, Joe. 'By George!' I thought. 'By George, it might be Joe Perley! He's the only young man in town not married, engaged, or feeble-minded, that hasn't ever showed any interest in Miss Mary. There's no two ways about it: likely as not it's liable to be Joe Perley!'

"I never heard anything crazier in my life!" Joe said. "I don't suppose Mary Ricketts has given me two thoughts in the last five years."

Mr. Allen tilted back in his chair, his feet upon a rung of the table. He placed his cigar at the left extremity of his mouth, gazed at the ceiling, and waved his right hand in a take-it-or-leave-it gesture.

"Well, *why* would she?" Joe demanded. "There's nothing about *me* that——"

"No," said his friend. "Nothing except she doesn't know you very well."

At that Joe Perley laughed. "You are the funniest old Lucius!" he said. "Just because I've never been

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around there and the rest have, you say that proves——”

Mr. Allen waved his hand again. “I only say there’s *somebody* could get her to go to that concert with him. Absolutely! Why absolutely? It’s spring-time; she’s twenty-three. Of course, if it *is* you, she isn’t very liable to hear the music except along with her family—not when you’ve got such pressing engagements *here*, of course! I’m thinking of going up there again pretty soon myself, to see if maybe Judge and Mrs. Ricketts aren’t going to walk uptown for the concert, and maybe I can sort of push myself in among the family so that I can walk anyway in the same *group* with Mary! It’s going to be moonlight, and as balmy as a night in a piece of poetry! By George! you can smell apple-blossoms from one end of the town to the other, Joe!”

“How you hate talking!” Mr. Perley remarked discouragingly.

“I hear the band is going to try ‘Schubert’s Serenade,’” Lucius continued. “The boy’s aren’t so bad as we make out, after all; the truth is, they play almighty well. I expect you’ll be able to hear some of it from in here, Joe; but take *me* now—I want to be out in the moonlight in that apple-blossom smell when they play ‘Schubert’s Serenade!’ I want to be somewhere where I can see the moonshine shadow of Mary Ricketts’s hat fall across her cheek, so I can spend my time guessing whether she’s listening to the music with her eyes shut or open. It’s a pink-and-

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white hat, and she's wearing a pink-and-white dress, too, to-day, Joe. She was sitting under those apple-blossoms, and the little bir——"

Sudden, loud, and strong expressions suffered him not to continue for several moments.

"Certainly, Joe," Mr. Allen then resumed. "I will not mention them again. I was only leading to the remark that nightingales serenading through the almond-groves of Sicily probably have nothing particular on our enterprising little city during a night in apple-blossom time. My great trouble, Joe, is never getting *used* to its being springtime. Every year when it comes around again it hits me just the same way—maybe a little more so each year that I grow older. And this has been the first plumb genuine spring day we've had.

"At the present hour this first true blue spring day is hushing itself down into the first spring evening, and in a little while there'll be another miracle: the first scented and silvered spring night. All over town the old folks are coming out from their suppers to sit on their front porches, and the children are beginning to play hi-spy in and out among the trees. Pretty soon they'll all, old and young, be strolling up-town to hear the band play on the court-house steps. I expect some of the young couples already *have* started; they like to walk slowly and not say much, on the way to the spring concert, you know."

Mr. Allen drank another glass of buttermilk, smiled, then murmured with repletion and the pathos of a concluding bit of enthusiasm. "Oh, Lordy,

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Lordy!" he said, "What it is to be twenty or twenty-five in springtime!"

"Not for me, Lucius," Mr. Perley rejoined, shaking his head.

"No, I suppose not. It does seem pretty rough," said Lucius, sympathetically, "to think of you sitting here in this reeky hole, when pretty nearly every other young fellow in town will be strolling through the apple-blossom smell in the moonlight with a girl on his arm, and the band playing, and all. Old soak Beeslum'll probably be in here to join you after while, though; and four or five farm hands, and some of the regular Saturday-night town drunks, and maybe two or three Swedes. Oh, I expect you'll have *company* enough, Joe!"

"I guess so. Anyhow, I haven't much choice! This thing's got me, and I've got to go through with it, Lucius."

"I see. Yes, sir, it's too bad! Too bad!" And Lucius looked sympathetically down, then cheerfully up again, as the swinging-doors parted to admit the entrance of the returned bartender. "Hello, George!"

"Back a'ready," said George, self-approvingly. "Ham, fried potatoes, coffee, and griddle-cakes, all tucked inside o' me, too! Didn't miss any customers, did I?"

"No."

George came to the table. "Lemme look how many drinks you owe me fer sence I went out, Joe," he said. "I had the place where she come to in the neck of the bottle marked with my thumb." He lifted the

bottle, regarded it thoughtfully at first, then with some surprise. He set it down upon the table without comment, began to whistle "Little Annie Rooney," went behind the bar, doffed his hat, resumed his apron, and continued to whistle.

Mr. Allen rose, dusting some crumbs of cracker from his attire. "I guess I must have won the butter-milk record, George," he said, as he placed a silver dollar upon the bar. "If buttermilk were intoxicating there wouldn't be a sober creature on the face of the earth. Trouble with your other stuff, George, it *tastes* so rotten!"

"I take buttermilk sometimes myself, Lu," said George as he made change. "I guess there ain't nobody seen me carryin' much hard liquor sence my second child was born. That was the time they had to jug me, and—whoo, *gosh!* you'd ought to seen what I went through when I got home that night! She's little and she was sick-abed, too, but that didn't git in *her* way none! No, sir!"

"Good night," said Lucius cheerily. "I'm going to stroll along Pawpaw Street before the band starts. Moon'll be 'way up in a little while now, and on such a night as this is going to be did Jessica, the Jew's daughter—— *You* know what I mean, George."

"Yep," said George blankly. "I gotcha, Lu."

"I'm going," said Lucius, "to go and push in with some folks to listen to the band with. Good night, Joe."

Joe Perley did not turn his head, but sat staring

fixedly at the table, his attitude being much the same as that in which Lucius had discovered him.

"Good night, Joe," the departing gentleman paused to repeat.

"What?"

"Nothing," said Lucius. "I only said 'good night.'"

"All right," said Joe, absently. "Good night."

Mr. Allen took a musical departure. "Oh, as I strolled out one summer evening," he sang, "for to meet Miss Nellie Green, all the birds and the flow'rs was singing sweetly, wherev—urr they was to be seen!"

Thus, singing heartily, he passed between the swinging-doors and out to the street. Here he continued his euphonic mood, but moderated his expression of it to an inconspicuous humming. Dusk had fallen, a dusk as scented and as alive with spring as he had claimed it would be; and a fair shaft of the rising moon already struck upon the white cupola of the court-house. . . .

Mary Ricketts was leaning upon the front gate of the Ricketts place when he came there.

"Good evening, Miss Mary," he said. "Are the judge and your mother at home?"

"They're right there on the front porch, Mr. Allen," she said cordially. "Won't you come in?"

"In a minute," he responded. "It does me good to hear you answer when I ask for your parents, Miss Mary."

"How is that?"

"Why," he said, "you always sound so friendly when I ask for *them*!"

She laughed, and explained her laughter by saying, "It's funny you don't always ask for them!"

"Just so," he agreed. "I've been thinking about that. Are you all going up to the Square pretty soon, to hear the concert?"

"Father and mother are, I think," she said. "I'm not."

"Just 'waiting at the gate'?"

"Not *for* any one!"

Lucius took off his hat and fanned himself, a conciliatory gesture. "I tell you I feel mighty sorry for one young man in this town to-night," he said.

"Who's that, Mr. Allen?"

"Well—" he hesitated. "I don't know if I ought to tell *you* about it."

"Why not me?" she asked, not curiously.

"Well—it's that young Joe Perley."

Miss Ricketts was mildly amused; Lucius's tone was serious, and if she had any interest whatever in Mr. Perley it was of a quality most casual and remote. "Why should you either tell me or not tell me anything about him?" she asked.

"You know he's such a good-looking young fellow," said Lucius. "And he's going to make a fine lawyer, too; I've had him with me in a couple of cases, and I've an idea he might have something like a real career if——" he paused.

"Yes?" she said, idly. "If what? And why is it you feel so sorry for him, and why did you hesitate to tell *me*? What's it all about, Mr. Allen?"

"I suppose I'd better explain, now I've gone this

far," he said, a little embarrassed. "I was talking with Joe to-day, and—well, the fact is we got to talking about you."

"You did?" Her tone betokened an indifference unmistakably genuine. "Well?"

Lucius laughed with increased embarrassment. "Well—the fact is we talked about you a long while."

"Indeed?" she said coldly, but there was a slight interest now perceptible under the coldness; for Miss Ricketts was not unhuman. "Was there a verdict?"

"It—it wasn't so much what he said, exactly—no, not so much that," Lucius circumlocuted. "It was more the—the length of time we were talking about you. That was the thing that struck *me* about it, because I didn't know—that is, I'd never heard—I——"

"What *are* you trying to say, Mr. Allen?"

"Well, I mean," said Lucius, "I mean I hadn't known that he came around here at all."

"He doesn't."

"That's why I was so surprised."

"Surprised at what?" she said impatiently.

"Why," said Lucius, "surprised at the length of time that we were talking about you!"

"What nonsense!" she cried. "*What* nonsense! I don't suppose he's said two words to me or I to him in two years!"

"Yes," Lucius assented. "That's what makes it all the more remarkable! I supposed the only girl he ever thought *anything* about was Molly Baker, but he told me the only reason he ever goes there is just because she lives next door to him."

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"Not very polite to Molly!" said Miss Ricketts, and she laughed with some indulgence for this ungallantry.

"Still, Molly's a determined girl," Lucius suggested; "and she might——"

"She might what?"

"Nothing," said Lucius. "I was only remembering I'd always heard she was such a—such a *grasping* sort of girl."

"Had you?"

"Yes, hadn't you?"

She was thoughtful for a moment. "Oh, I don't know."

"So it seemed to me—well" He laughed hesitatingly. "Well, it certainly was curious, the length of time we were talking about you to-day!" And he paused again as if awaiting her comment; but she offered none. "Well," he said, finally, "I expect I better go join the old folks on the porch where I belong."

He was heartily received and made welcome in that sedate retreat, where, as he said, he belonged; but throughout the greetings and the subsequent conversation he kept a corner of his eye upon the dim white figure in the shadow of the maple-trees down by the gate.

Presently another figure, a dark one, graceful and young, came slowly along the sidewalk—slowly and rather hesitatingly. This figure paused, took a few steps onward again; then definitely halted near the gate.

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"Who is that young man out there, talking to Mary?" asked Mary's mother. "Can you make out, father?"

"It's that young Joe Perley," the judge answered.

"I've heard he drinks a good deal sometimes," said Mrs. Ricketts, thoughtfully. "His mother says he tries not to, but that it comes over him, and that he's afraid he'll turn out like his father."

Mr. Allen laughed cheerfully. "Anybody at Joe's age can turn out any way he wants to," he said. "Mrs. Perley needn't worry about Joe any more. I just sat with him an hour down at the National House, and there was an open whisky bottle on the table before us, and he never once touched it all the time I was talking with him."

"Well, I'm glad of that," said Mrs. Ricketts. "That ought to show he has plenty of will-power, anyhow."

"Plenty," said Lucius.

Then Mary's young voice called from the spaces of night. "I'm going to walk up-town to the concert with Mr. Perley, mother. You'd better wear your shawl if *you* come."

And there was the click of the gate as she passed out.

"We might as well be going along then, I suppose," said Mrs. Ricketts, rising. "You'll come with us old folks, Lucius?"

As the three old folks sauntered along the moon-speckled sidewalk the two slim young figures in advance were faintly revealed to them, likewise saun-

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tering. And Lucius was right: you could smell apple-blossoms from one end of the town to the other.

"I hope our boys will win the band tournament at the county fair next summer," said Mrs. Ricketts. "Don't you think there's a pretty good chance of it, Lucius?"

For a moment he appeared not to have heard her, and she gently repeated her question:

"Don't you think there's a pretty good chance of it?"

"Yes, more than a chance," he dreamily replied. "It only takes a hint in springtime. They'll do practically anything you tell 'em to. It's mostly the apple-blossoms and the little birds."